https://comment-fic.livejournal.com/212797.html?thread=45169213#t45169213

Work Text:

It says something about how much Nick's improved that he has a new morning ritual that involves going outside. He puts on a pair of slippers, walks to the front door, opens it and walks the twenty-three steps out to the mailbox and checks both it and the yellow newspaper box next to it.

He doesn't push himself and actually look around or spend any longer out there, but it's *nice* to get a newspaper.

Up until the day he opens the door to discover a man in a *really* tatty suit lying on his doorstep, that is.

God has a sick sense of humor, is Nick's first thought. Because he has a sinking feeling he knows who it is, or who it might be - the man groans, and sits up, clutching at his head.

"And all saints preserve us," Crowley swears before he gets a look at Nick, and then he freezes, pales, and Nick's second thought isn't coherent, just a sick feeling in the bottom of his stomach. He knows that fear in Crowley's eyes, he knows who this is, and it occurs to him that he might want to close the door if he doesn't want to face this.

"I'm not him," Nick says instead, and tries to close the door, but he can't make himself finish the movement. "Don't look at me like that."

Crowley stands up. Nick steps back.

"Right then. I'll just be going then. Yes?"

That's not right, Nick thinks. He frowns at Crowley. "You were unconscious?"

"I might have been." Crowley sound cautious, and as much as Nick doesn't blame him for that, he still doesn't like it.

He looks Crowley over: the demon's been through the wringer and back, if the condition of his suit is an indicator of anything. Crowley himself looks exhausted and determined not to show it. Haunted, too, but by what Nick doesn't know.

So it might not be the best idea in the world when he invites Crowley in for coffee.

Because he does have the pot making some, and -

He's not expecting it when Crowley nods at him and walks inside.

"I was dead. Not unconscious."

"Oh." Nick doesn't ask. He thinks Crowley's grateful that he doesn't.

"I'm also human right now."

Nick nods and pushes over a plateful of toast, and watches Crowley take one and butter it.

"I need to know: do you know why I'm here? And are you going to kick me out or expect me to do you any favors?"

"No," Nick says, and sips his coffee. He considers inviting Crowley to the meeting in a few days, then decides against it. "Are you going to stay?"

"For now." Crowley says.

Nick nods and gets up, heading outside. He has a paper to get.

When the monthly envelope of cash from God arrives in the mail two days later, Nick's not that surprised to find two of them, one addressed to Crowley.